

## **Appendix A**

### **INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC GROWTH AND THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN NON-METROPOLITAN ENGLAND**

Non-metropolitan areas account for roughly half of England's economy and population. This means that their economic contribution, and their growth potential, is as significant for the nation as that of the big cities. But their mix of businesses, and the challenges faced by areas of less dense population, of more diffuse transport networks, of market towns, green belts, and small cities, are different, and so is the pattern of governance.

Those same patterns of settlement, travel and land use, together with non-metropolitan areas' particular demographic and social trends, also present particular challenges for the established model of funding and organising public services. Non-metropolitan areas, for example, are among those most at risk from the spiralling costs of care for an aging population. Dispersed service delivery points add to unit costs, but also make rural infrastructure particularly vulnerable to cuts in funding.

The democratically accountable local authorities of non-metropolitan England have risen to these challenges over the last few years. Counties, districts, and unitary areas have been among the leaders in remodelling public services through new forms of working and new approaches to engaging with citizens. The enthusiasm with which non-metropolitan areas have approached community budgets is one illustration of the way they have shown leadership.

The Independent Commission on Economic Growth and the Future of Public Services in Non-metropolitan England will be tasked to:

- review the economic, social and demographic trends facing non-metropolitan areas;
- assess their strengths and challenges and identify in particular where their most powerful potential for future economic prosperity lies;
- review steps taken so far by businesses and the public sector to meet those challenges and promote growth;
- and make recommendations about the most effective further steps which business and the public sector could take to maximise the potential of non-metropolitan areas for environmentally and socially sustainable growth, supported and underpinned by sustainable and efficient public services.

The Commission would consist of about ten members drawn from a range of backgrounds, including councils, under an independent sector Chairman, who might be drawn from the private sector. It would be supported by independent advice, working together with the LGA, CCN and DCN. It will be asked to take evidence and publish an interim report by Spring 2014 and a final report with recommendation by Summer 2014, before the 2014 LGA conference. The Commission's costs would be funded by the LGA, DCN, CCN, and other partners and would not exceed £100,000.